



State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations  
**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**  
Shepard Building  
255 Westminster Street  
Providence, Rhode Island 02903-3400

Enclosure 5a2  
December 20, 2016

Ken Wagner, Ph.D.  
Commissioner

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**TO:** Members of the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education  
**FROM:** Ken Wagner, Ph.D., Commissioner *KW*  
**RE:** **Paul Cuffee School – Request for Charter Expansion Amendment**

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I present for your consideration a recommendation to approve Paul Cuffee School's request for an expansion.

Amendment Request for Expansion:

The Paul Cuffee School is an independent network charter located in Providence. Paul Cuffee School is authorized to serve up to 774 in grades K-12. Students enroll from Providence only in a separate lower school (K-5), middle school (6-8), and upper school (9-12). Paul Cuffee School requested an amendment to its charter to increase the charter's enrollment from 774 students to 813 students in grades K-12 – equivalent to 39 students, 1 additional student in each classroom.

In accordance to R.I.G.L. §16-77.3-3, requests for amendments to a charter for expansion require the action of the Council of Elementary and Secondary Education. Further, when considering the overall merit of a charter expansion request, R.I.G.L. § 16-77.3-3 requires the Council to place substantial weight on the fiscal impact on the city or town, programmatic impact on the sending school district, and the educational impact on the students in the sending district to ensure that the proposal is economically prudent for the city or town, and academically prudent for the proposed sending school district and for all students in the sending district.

RIDE has conducted an in-depth review of the proposed amendment request, including Paul Cuffee School's track record of academic performance, public feedback, and the impact that the proposed expansion request would have on local communities.

RIDE has concluded that the proposal submitted by Paul Cuffee School is both academically and economically prudent, and will result in high-quality academic opportunities for Providence's students.

**RECOMMENDATION: THAT, the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education moves to approve the Paul Cuffee School charter amendment for expansion, permitting Paul Cuffee School to enroll up to 813 students in grades K-12 from Providence.**